

Texts in Applied Mathematics 15

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(continued after index)

Susanne C. Brenner

L. Ridgway Scott

# The Mathematical Theory of Finite Element Methods

Third Edition

 Springer

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## Series Preface

Mathematics is playing an ever more important role in the physical and biological sciences, provoking a blurring of boundaries between scientific disciplines and a resurgence of interest in the modern as well as the classical techniques of applied mathematics. This renewal of interest, both in research and teaching, has led to the establishment of the series Texts in Applied Mathematics (TAM).

The development of new courses is a natural consequence of a high level of excitement on the research frontier as newer techniques, such as numerical and symbolic computer systems, dynamical systems, and chaos, mix with and reinforce the traditional methods of applied mathematics. Thus, the purpose of this textbook series is to meet the current and future needs of these advances and to encourage the teaching of new courses.

TAM will publish textbooks suitable for use in advanced undergraduate and beginning graduate courses, and will complement the Applied Mathematical Sciences (AMS) series, which will focus on advanced textbooks and research-level monographs.

Pasadena, California  
Providence, Rhode Island  
College Park, Maryland

J.E. Marsden  
L. Sirovich  
S.S. Antman

# Preface to the Third Edition

This edition contains four new sections on the following topics: the BDDC domain decomposition preconditioner (Section 7.8), a convergent adaptive algorithm (Section 9.5), interior penalty methods (Section 10.5) and Poincaré-Friedrichs inequalities for piecewise  $W_p^1$  functions (Section 10.6). We have made improvements throughout the text, many of which were suggested by colleagues, to whom we are grateful. New exercises have been added and the list of references has also been expanded and updated.

Some of the new material originated from our research and we would like to thank the National Science Foundation for support. The first author would also like to thank the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation for supporting her visit to Germany in the Summer of 2007, during which the work on this edition was completed. The second author would also like to thank the Université Pierre et Marie Curie for supporting his visits to Paris during the past several years, during which work related to this edition was carried out.

In the preface to the first edition, we outlined different ways the book could be used in courses, but since some chapter numbers have changed, we rephrase these suggestions here. Chapters 0 through 5 form the essential material for a course (these chapter numbers have not changed). Chapters 6 and 7 provide an introduction to efficient iterative solvers for the linear systems of finite element equations, but they do not contain material required by later chapters. A course emphasizing algorithmic aspects would include them. Similarly, Chapters 8 and 9 are not required in later chapters. A course covering challenging analysis questions would cover these. The former develops and applies max-norm error estimates to nonlinear problems, and the latter introduces the concept of mesh adaptivity. Chapter 10, however, has an essential role in the subsequent chapters. But one could cover only the first and third sections of this chapter and then go on to Chapter 11 or 12 to study typical systems of differential equations found in applications. Chapter 13 is essentially a continuation of Chapter 12. Chapters 10-13 form the core for a course emphasizing basic models in mechanics. Chapter 14 is an independent topic at a somewhat more advanced level that only depends on Chapters 0-5. It develops some functional analysis techniques and their application to finite element methods.

Baton Rouge, LA  
Chicago, IL  
20/07/2007

Susanne C. Brenner  
L. Ridgway Scott

## Preface to the Second Edition

This edition contains two new chapters. The first one is on the additive Schwarz theory with applications to multilevel and domain decomposition preconditioners, and the second one is an introduction to *a posteriori* error estimators and adaptivity. We have also included a new section on an example of a one-dimensional adaptive mesh, a new section on the discrete Sobolev inequality and new exercises throughout. The list of references has also been expanded and updated.

We take this opportunity to extend thanks to everyone who provided comments and suggestions about this book over the years, and to the National Science Foundation for support. We also wish to thank Achi Dosanjh and the production staff at Springer-Verlag for their patience and care.

Columbia, SC  
Chicago, IL  
20/02/2002

Susanne C. Brenner  
L. Ridgway Scott

# Preface to the First Edition

This book develops the basic mathematical theory of the finite element method, the most widely used technique for engineering design and analysis. One purpose of this book is to formalize basic tools that are commonly used by researchers in the field but never published. It is intended primarily for mathematics graduate students and mathematically sophisticated engineers and scientists.

The book has been the basis for graduate-level courses at The University of Michigan, Penn State University and the University of Houston. The prerequisite is only a course in real variables, and even this has not been necessary for well-prepared engineers and scientists in many cases. The book can be used for a course that provides an introduction to basic functional analysis, approximation theory and numerical analysis, while building upon and applying basic techniques of real variable theory.

Chapters 0 through 5 form the essential material for a course. Chapter 0 provides a microcosm of what is to follow, developed in the one-dimensional case. Chapters 1 through 4 provide the basic theory, and Chapter 5 develops basic applications of this theory. From this point, courses can bifurcate in various directions. Chapter 6 provides an introduction to efficient iterative solvers for the linear systems of finite element equations. While essential from a practical point of view (our reason for placing it in a prominent position), this could be skipped, as it is not essential for further chapters. Similarly, Chapter 7, which derives error estimates in the maximum norm and shows how such estimates can be applied to nonlinear problems, can be skipped as desired.

Chapter 8, however, has an essential role in the following chapters. But one could cover only the first and third sections of this chapter and then go on to Chapter 9 in order to see an example of the more complex systems of differential equations that are the norm in applications. Chapter 10 depends to some extent on Chapter 9, and Chapter 11 is essentially a continuation of Chapter 10. Chapter 12 presents Banach space interpolation techniques with applications to convergence results for finite element methods. This is an independent topic at a somewhat more advanced level.

To be more precise, we describe three possible course paths that can be



chosen. In all cases, the first step is to follow Chapters 0 through 5. Someone interested to present some of the “hard estimates” of the subject could then choose from Chapters 6 through 8, and 12. On the other hand, someone interested more in physical applications could select from Sect. 8.1, Sect. 8.3 and Chapters 9 through 11. Someone interested primarily in algorithmic efficiency and code development issues could follow Chapters 6, 8, 10 and 11.

The omissions from the book are so numerous that it is hard to begin to list them. We attempt to list the most glaring omissions for which there are excellent books available to provide material.

We avoid time-dependent problems almost completely, partly because of the existence of the book of (Thomé 1984). Our extensive development of different types of elements and the corresponding approximation theory is complementary to Thomé’s approach. Similarly, our development of physical applications is limited primarily to linear systems in continuum mechanics. More substantial physical applications can be found in the book by (Johnson 1987).

Very little is said here about adaptivity. This active research area is addressed in various conference proceedings (cf. Babuška, Chandra & Flaherty 1983 and Babuška, Zienkiewicz, Gago & de A. Oliveira 1986).

We emphasize the variety of discretizations (that is, different “elements”) that can be used, and we present them (whenever possible) as families depending on a parameter (usually the degree of approximation). Thus, a spirit of “high-order” approximations is developed, although we do not consider increasing the degree of approximation (as is done in the so-called P-method and spectral element method) as the means of obtaining convergence. Rather, we focus on mesh subdivision as the convergence parameter. The recent book by (Szabo & Babuška 1991) may be consulted for alternatives in this direction.

Although we provide a brief introduction to mixed methods, the importance of this subject is not appropriately reflected here. However, the recent book by (Brezzi & Fortin 1991) can be consulted for a thorough treatment of the subject.

We draw extensively on the book of (Ciarlet 1978), both following many of its ideas and using it as a reference for further development of various subjects. This book has recently been updated in (Ciarlet & Lions 1991), which also contains an excellent survey of mixed methods. Moreover, the Handbook series to which the latter reference belongs can be expected to provide valuable reference material in the future.

We take this opportunity to thank the many people who have helped at various stages, and in many different ways, in the preparation of this book. The many students who struggled through early drafts of the book made invaluable contributions. Many readers of the preliminary versions will find their specific suggestions incorporated.

This book was processed by the authors using the  $\text{\TeX}$  macro package from Springer-Verlag.

# Contents

Series Preface .....	v
Preface to the Third Edition .....	vii
Preface to the Second Edition .....	ix
Preface to the First Edition .....	xi
0 Basic Concepts .....	1
0.1 Weak Formulation of Boundary Value Problems .....	1
0.2 Ritz-Galerkin Approximation .....	3
0.3 Error Estimates .....	4
0.4 Piecewise Polynomial Spaces – The Finite Element Method .....	7
0.5 Relationship to Difference Methods .....	9
0.6 Computer Implementation of Finite Element Methods .....	10
0.7 Local Estimates .....	12
0.8 Adaptive Approximation .....	13
0.9 Weighted Norm Estimates .....	15
0.x Exercises .....	19
1 Sobolev Spaces .....	23
1.1 Review of Lebesgue Integration Theory .....	23
1.2 Generalized (Weak) Derivatives .....	26
1.3 Sobolev Norms and Associated Spaces .....	29
1.4 Inclusion Relations and Sobolev’s Inequality .....	32
1.5 Review of Chapter 0 .....	35
1.6 Trace Theorems .....	36
1.7 Negative Norms and Duality .....	40
1.x Exercises .....	42

2	Variational Formulation of Elliptic Boundary Value Problems . . . . .	49
2.1	Inner-Product Spaces . . . . .	49
2.2	Hilbert Spaces . . . . .	51
2.3	Projections onto Subspaces . . . . .	52
2.4	Riesz Representation Theorem . . . . .	55
2.5	Formulation of Symmetric Variational Problems . . . . .	56
2.6	Formulation of Nonsymmetric Variational Problems . . . . .	59
2.7	The Lax-Milgram Theorem . . . . .	60
2.8	Estimates for General Finite Element Approximation . . . . .	64
2.9	Higher-dimensional Examples . . . . .	65
2.x	Exercises . . . . .	66
3	The Construction of a Finite Element Space . . . . .	69
3.1	The Finite Element . . . . .	69
3.2	Triangular Finite Elements . . . . .	71
	The Lagrange Element . . . . .	72
	The Hermite Element . . . . .	75
	The Argyris Element . . . . .	76
3.3	The Interpolant . . . . .	77
3.4	Equivalence of Elements . . . . .	81
3.5	Rectangular Elements . . . . .	85
	Tensor Product Elements . . . . .	85
	The Serendipity Element . . . . .	86
3.6	Higher-dimensional Elements . . . . .	87
3.7	Exotic Elements . . . . .	89
3.x	Exercises . . . . .	90
4	Polynomial Approximation Theory in Sobolev Spaces . . . . .	93
4.1	Averaged Taylor Polynomials . . . . .	93
4.2	Error Representation . . . . .	96
4.3	Bounds for Riesz Potentials . . . . .	100
4.4	Bounds for the Interpolation Error . . . . .	105
4.5	Inverse Estimates . . . . .	111
4.6	Tensor-product Polynomial Approximation . . . . .	113
4.7	Isoparametric Polynomial Approximation . . . . .	118
4.8	Interpolation of Non-smooth Functions . . . . .	119
4.9	A Discrete Sobolev Inequality . . . . .	123
4.x	Exercises . . . . .	125

5	<i>n</i> -Dimensional Variational Problems	129
5.1	Variational Formulation of Poisson’s Equation	129
5.2	Variational Formulation of the Pure Neumann Problem	132
5.3	Coercivity of the Variational Problem	134
5.4	Variational Approximation of Poisson’s Equation	136
5.5	Elliptic Regularity Estimates	138
5.6	General Second-Order Elliptic Operators	141
5.7	Variational Approximation of General Elliptic Problems	144
5.8	Negative-Norm Estimates	146
5.9	The Plate-Bending Biharmonic Problem	148
5.x	Exercises	151
6	Finite Element Multigrid Methods	155
6.1	A Model Problem	155
6.2	Mesh-Dependent Norms	157
6.3	The Multigrid Algorithm	159
6.4	Approximation Property	161
6.5	$\mathcal{W}$ -cycle Convergence for the $k^{\text{th}}$ Level Iteration	162
6.6	$\mathcal{V}$ -cycle Convergence for the $k^{\text{th}}$ Level Iteration	165
6.7	Full Multigrid Convergence Analysis and Work Estimates	170
6.x	Exercises	172
7	Additive Schwarz Preconditioners	175
7.1	Abstract Additive Schwarz Framework	175
7.2	The Hierarchical Basis Preconditioner	179
7.3	The BPX Preconditioner	183
7.4	The Two-level Additive Schwarz Preconditioner	185
7.5	Nonoverlapping Domain Decomposition Methods	191
7.6	The BPS Preconditioner	197
7.7	The Neumann-Neumann Preconditioner	201
7.8	The BDDC Preconditioner	205
7.x	Exercises	210
8	Max-norm Estimates	215
8.1	Main Theorem	215
8.2	Reduction to Weighted Estimates	218
8.3	Proof of Lemma 8.2.6	220
8.4	Proofs of Lemmas 8.3.7 and 8.3.11	224
8.5	$L^p$ Estimates (Regular Coefficients)	229

8.6  $L^p$  Estimates (Irregular Coefficients) ..... 231

8.7 A Nonlinear Example ..... 235

8.x Exercises ..... 238

9 Adaptive Meshes ..... 241

9.1 A priori Estimates ..... 242

9.2 Error Estimators ..... 244

9.3 Local Error Estimates ..... 247

9.4 Estimators for Linear Forms and Other Norms ..... 249

9.5 A Convergent Adaptive Algorithm ..... 253

9.6 Conditioning of Finite Element Equations ..... 261

9.7 Bounds on the Condition Number ..... 264

9.8 Applications to the Conjugate-Gradient Method ..... 266

9.x Exercises ..... 267

10 Variational Crimes ..... 271

10.1 Departure from the Framework ..... 272

10.2 Finite Elements with Interpolated Boundary Conditions ..... 274

10.3 Nonconforming Finite Elements ..... 281

10.4 Isoparametric Finite Elements ..... 286

10.5 Discontinuous Finite Elements ..... 289

10.6 Poincaré-Friedrichs Inequalities for Piecewise  $W_p^1$  Functions . 296

10.x Exercises ..... 303

11 Applications to Planar Elasticity ..... 311

11.1 The Boundary Value Problems ..... 311

11.2 Weak Formulation and Korn's Inequality ..... 313

11.3 Finite Element Approximation and Locking ..... 320

11.4 A Robust Method for the Pure Displacement Problem ..... 323

11.x Exercises ..... 327

12 Mixed Methods ..... 331

12.1 Examples of Mixed Variational Formulations ..... 331

12.2 Abstract Mixed Formulation ..... 333

12.3 Discrete Mixed Formulation ..... 336

12.4 Convergence Results for Velocity Approximation ..... 338

12.5 The Discrete Inf-Sup Condition ..... 341

12.6 Verification of the Inf-Sup Condition ..... 347

12.x Exercises ..... 353

13 Iterative Techniques for Mixed Methods ..... 355

    13.1 Iterated Penalty Method ..... 355

    13.2 Stopping Criteria ..... 359

    13.3 Augmented Lagrangian Method ..... 361

    13.4 Application to the Navier-Stokes Equations ..... 363

    13.5 Computational Examples ..... 366

    13.x Exercises ..... 369

14 Applications of Operator-Interpolation Theory ..... 371

    14.1 The Real Method of Interpolation ..... 371

    14.2 Real Interpolation of Sobolev Spaces ..... 373

    14.3 Finite Element Convergence Estimates ..... 376

    14.4 The Simultaneous Approximation Theorem ..... 379

    14.5 Precise Characterizations of Regularity ..... 379

    14.x Exercises ..... 380

References ..... 383

Index ..... 393